Murder Can Be Fun

No. 5 — 75¢

FATTY ARBUCKLE

takes the Rap(pe)

JOHNNY MARR
P. O. BOX 640111
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109

Time for the big ego-blast, as MCBF celebrates its first birthday. Happy birthday to you, I know you sniff glue. Presents graciously accepted, by the way. It's still a baby with shit in its diapers, but wait until it hits the terrible twos! Note growth: four extra pages free, courtesy of cutthroat copycenter competition. Could offset be lurking in the future?

I could bore you for a few hours on adventures in the small press jungle, horrors of returned mail, postage due, & attempts of illiterates to "trade" - but I won't. Wait for my memoirs.

Now, to the issue at hand. Not only is this issue early, it is timely. Instead of your annual boring Julius Caesar/Ides of March bash, you can have a Roscoe Arbuckle Cenntenial Celebration (March 15, 1887 - March 15, 1987). I leave the details to you twisted imaginations.

Looking towards the future, there'll be more fun. #6 tenatively scheduled for May or June with a few surprises I haven't figured out yet. Well worth the 50¢, though. Look for Cornell Woolrich.

In closing, I'm toying with the idea of a special issue devoted to a theme, specifically "I Hate Sports" or "Advice for the Lovelorn". What thinkest thou?

Time for the annual wrap-up. The KAREN CAPRENTER FAN CLUB is sadly no more. Perhaps because 3/4 of their membership wanted to change the name to the ANOREXIC FAN CLUB? Phoebe, that wonderful little newsletter of eccentricity, has moved with editor James McPhee to 3220 N St., NW, #333/ Washington, DC 2007. Send 'em a buck for a copy if you're not an asshole.

EDWARD R. HAMILTON, BOOKSELLER catalog - card to Falls Village, CT 06031 (Right, no street address)
This gigantic book catalog consists of nothing but remainders, the step between B. Dalton & the pulp mill. Greatly reduced prices, natch, like BEAVER PAPERS for $1.49. Why pay full dicounted prices at Crown Books?

NATIONAL COALITION FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE Spiderman Comic - $1 from NCPCA/ Box 2866/ Chicago, IL 60690
I dig Spiderman. I dig child molestation. Thus, we have an unbeatable combination as old WebHead swings in in a nick of time to stop some perfert from touching a child like he /she doesn't want to be touched. The paranoia of '86.

AMOK CATALOG - $1 from Box 875112/ Los Angeles, CA 90087
Their vital fiction supplement is out. These are the folks you can order all in-print Jim Thompson books from. To say nothing of Cornell Woolrich, WS Burroughs, Celine, & any author who's ever been read at a fashionable cafe.

THE FAMILY TRAVEL LOG - 25¢ from Box 406/ Kewanee, IL 61443
A very strange/normal paper that'll give you a trip through the mind of middle-aged Middle America. Coverage is divided between country music, Winnebago travel, and rip-off mail order business opprotunities. Also a great lonely hearts column catering to fat middle-aged Christians.

THE MIND BLASTER - $1.50 from Mark Johnston/ Buck Rt, Box 111/ Hinton, WV 25951
Put out by some sub-subsidiary of the Sub-Genius people, we are enlightened by more weird mail sources, strange films, odd books, Robert Anton Wilson, & more conspiracies than you can shake a stick at. Not for pinks & other dupes.

DR. SMITH - $2 from Candy/ 363 Queen St. East/ Tronto, Ontario M5A 1T2 CANADA
Just because a few PR bands get interviewed in here, don't get put off. The bulk of this rag is filled with all those now forgotten bits of punk rock culture that made things interesting. Issue I have includes: an excellent assortment of clippings (murder, scandal, stupidity), a few above-average stories, Archie comics, & some good collages. Grubby PR zine editors: take note.

MCBF is published every few months by Johnny Marr to document his deteriorating mental condition for future generations. Contents © 1987. Ask before you reprint, fools. Wise people have the next two issues of MCBF delivered to their door for only $1. Shouldn't you? Wholesale rates on request. Contributions welcomed, occaisonally, if not laughed at uproarously. Thanks to Eloise, Scott, Herb, Craig & Jane, whoever did the cartoon on the back, Ramona Essex, Caki, & all other perceptive souls. Kell smells!

The Boy and the Bottle

Things go better with Coke, right? Or so they say. Just try asking Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle.

He was the clown prince of the silent screen. Between 1913 and 1921, he made almost 150 films & commanded a salary of almost a million dollars a year, and this competing against luminaries like Charlie Chaplin & Buster Keaton. Yet, have you ever even seen a Fatty Arbuckle two-reeler? Any self-respecting rep house will give you Chaplin & Keaton retrospectives up your ass, but it's zip when it comes to Arbuckle the Actor.

But Arbuckle the Animal- now that's another story. Everyone's heard about that - the obese, brutal beast who pervesely rammed a Coke bottle up the vagina of one Virginia Rappe (pronounced rap-PAY) with fatal results. The resulting scandal shook Hollywood to its foundations, effectively ended Arbuckle's career, and sold a few million newspapers.

No doubt, it was a wonderfully tasteless & sleazy tale. The image of the rich, corrupt star brutally violating the young virginal aspiring actress was bound to set the tounges a-wagging, and wag they did. The whole affair literally developed its own mythology, with each legend being more sleazy than the last. But, hidden behind all these legends is one little forgotten fact - ARBUCKLE WAS INNOCENT!

First, forget everything you've heard about the Coke bottle. (Oddly enough, no one ever suggests that it might have been a Pepsi). This is just a rumour, dating back before his trials. A bottle could not have caused Virginia's injuries, and no one ever seriously suggested that it did. Sorry.

As the first big Hollywood scandal, the case is dé rigueur for all sleazy-side-of-Tinseltown books like HOLLYWOOD BABYLON & its clones (HOLLYWOOD R.I.P., HOLLYWOOD CONFIDENTIAL, HOLLYWOOD MYSTERIES), and their version is the best known, next to the Coke bottle story.

They claim that, for years, Fatty had been trying to get into Virginia's panties without any luck. For Labor Day weekend, 1921, he planned to motor up to San Francisco for some wild partying. He persuaded his friend Maude Delmont to drive Virginia up to the City & maneuver her to his party so he could try a few moves.

And this first part worked. The morning of September 5th, 1921 found Arbuckle & Co. safely checked into Suites 1219 - 1221 of the St Francis Hotel, arranging for a supply of bootleg gin. (It was Prohibition, after all). Across town, at the Palace Hotel, Virginia & Maude & friend Al Seminacher were

checked in. Around noon, Fatty called Al & told him to bring the girls on over. Virginia went, reluctantly. She would have been even more reluctant if she knew who the host was. She despised Fatty.

The party was in full swing when they got there. The gramaphone cranked out jazz full blast, the gin was good & plentiful, and in the middle there was the 266 pound master of mirth himself. At first, Virginia wasn't too enthused, especially when she saw the host, but a few screwdrivers got her into the spirit. Things got wild. Women began doffing their tops, and the bathrooms became havens of co-ed activities. Unfortunately, Virginia had to pee. Enroute to the bathroom, she was intercepted by Fatty who led her, leering, to the bedroom. "I've waited 5 years for this" he announced as he closed the door.

20 minutes of silence followed from the bedroom, broken by a piercing scream. The guests pounded on the door, but Arbuckle didn't open it until the manager was called. He came out, wearing Virginia's hat, saying: "She'll be all right. She's just drunk."

Virginia was lying on the bed, moaning, "I can't breath". No one can quite recall whether she was already nude, or frantically ripping at her clothes. No matter. Soon, everyone was trying their pet remedy on her naked body.

Fatty put a piece of ice, either on or in her cunt just to see if she was faking. They gave her bicarb of soda, which she only vomited. They threw her into a cold bath. Finally, annoyed with the racket, Fatty sprung for another room & had her dragged down to #1227. "Frankly, I don't care if you threw her out the window."

The party was over, and, unknown to Fatty, so was his career. He took the steamer back to LA the next day. Virginia was finally taken to the hospital, where she died on Sept. 9th of

peritonitis resulting from a ruptured bladder. Before she died, though, she told a nurse "Arbuckle did it".

The three trials that followed were, quite literally a 3 ring circus. The women's clubs, ministers, & newspapers were all out for blood. The DA wanted first degree murder, but all he could get was manslaughter, and even that wouldn't stick. Amid cries of bribery & perjury on both sides, the first two trials ended in hung juries. The 3rd not only found Fatty innocent, but issued an unprecedented proclaimation stating "Acquittal is not enough for Roscoe Arbuckle. We feel a great injustice has been done to him...".

OK. So goes the standard story. Still sounds pretty fishy, eh? Like maybe that jury got more than a few free lifetime theatre passes? Perhaps that ruptured bladder was from 266 pounds of flying Fatty, or maybe from that jagged chunk of ice. Or was it just plain over-enthusiasm?

Answer: none of the above. That fishy smell isn't from a bought jury, but from the attempts of various people to railroad him for a crime that not only he didn't commit, but was never committed. It's still a sleazy story - just not the one you thought.

Most of this, the "official" story, was based on the testimony of the party celebrants, especially Maude Delmont. Observers commented how most of the witness were waffling & contradictory. Hardly surprizing, since they all were sloshed at the time. Maude's testimony was the most damaging, and the DA's initial charges were based on her testimony at the inquest & pre-trial hearings. She should have been the star witness at the trials - YET SHE WAS NEVER CALLED TO TESTIFY! And for good reason, too. It seems that Maude was playing her own little game.

Her behavior at Virginia's bedside as she lay dying was more than a bit suspicious. According to Maude, Virginia moaned out accusations against Fatty - but what did Maude do? Something logical like call the cops? No! (The police investigation was ordered by the coroner). But Maude did hang on to Virginia's torn clothing for her own use. On September 7, she sent some telegrams to lawyers stating, "We have Roscoe Arbuckle in a hole here. Chance to make some money out of him". Sounds a bit like the old pigeon game, no? Supposedly, the defense was prepard to show that Maude had worked this scheme before. The DA was no fool. You can't let 'em make your star witness out to be a liar. Hence, no star witness.

That still leaves Fatty with a fatally injured girl in his rooms. Just how did Virginia's bladder rupture?

It'll probably never be known for sure. Much of the trials were taken up with conflicting medical testimony. About the only thing that was ruled out was the Coke Bottle. But there were enough squirrely things going on to suggest that whatever made her bladder burst, it wasn't Fatty.

First, after Virginia's initial collapse, there was an unpardonable delay in getting her to a hospital. A couple doctors examined her, saw she was bad off enough to require surgery, but kept mum. She wasn't moved to the hospital until Thursday, September 8th. And it wasn't to an ordinary general hospital - it was to the Wakefield Sanatorium, a maternity hospital. After she died, a post-mortem was performed without notifying the coroner, a very big medical no-no. He did get wind of it, & notified the police & launched the investigation. By the time they reached the hospital a few

crucial pieces of Virginia's innards were already gone. The cover-up was on, but who was covering what up? It wasn't the Hollywood bigwigs - there wasn't yet even a hint of the scandal that would cost them millions.

The only logical explanation for this, & those mysterious 20 minutes in the bedroom, are given by David Yallop in THE DAY THE LAUGHTER STOPPED. Forget all those bullshit stories Maude the conwoman told about Fatty trying to seduce Virginia. Here's what really happened.

Virginia herself was no robust, healthy white-flower girl. Between 1908 & 1910, she had had 5 abortions - quite an impressive total for those days, one that certainly would mess up her plumbing a bit. She had been diagnosed as having chronic cystitis, an inflamation of the bladder. During attacks, she would be in extreme pain & rip & tear at her clothtes. She also had gonorrhea.

At the party, Fatty went into the bedroom to change for his 3:00 ride. He found Virginia in the bathroom, vomitting. He put her on the bed & made her comfortable. Previously, she had put the bite on him for an abortion. He talked with her, made her comfortable, & went for help from his guests.

He returned with Zey Prevost to find Vriginia writhing on the bed, screaming & ripping at her clothes. Cystitis strikes again! The other guests came, they tried their home remedies, and so on, just like in Maude's story. But Fatty hadn't done anything.

Her bladder, already weakened by the cystitis, may have been ruptured by this rough handling. Or, it may have been punctured by the use of (now banned) glass catheters. Then, there's the maternity hospital. Why was Virginia moved there? Did they perform an illegal abortion which killed her? This would explain the seeming cover-up of the post-mortem. The organs removed & disposed of were the ones which would show traces of an abortion.

And there's no doubt about Fatty fucking her. He didn't. Virginia's gonorrhea was active, yet Fatty showed no signs or symptoms in the weeks he spent in jail.

Yeah, the whole thing stunk, & Fatty got really screwed. The newspapers editorialized about SF being used as Hollywood's garbage can. The women's clubs fromed the Women's Vigilance Committe to avenge their fallen sister. No wonder that the DA saw a political plum within reach if he could put Fatty behind bars.

He couldn't, but even with an innocent verdict, Fatty was ruined. He was banned from films by the newly formed Hays office. Even though the ban was lifted shortly after, outcry from the ministers & women's clubs prevented his screen return. His nightclub act was banned in most cities. He finally turned to directing under the pseudonym of William Goodrich (not Will B. Goode - that's a Buster Keaton joke). Even as late as 1973, his films were still officially banned in England.

He was not without support, though for what good it did him... Billy Sunday, the father of Prohibition, said "The man is being destroued by the greatest mass display of bigotry I have ever seen in this country". John Q. Public still missed him, too. Finally, in 1932, he got a chance to act in a series of 2-reelers. They were successful, and he had just signed to do a feature when he died of a heart attack on June 29, 1933.

Poor Fatty. He really got fucked, but not by Virginia, & certainly not in that hotel room on September 5th, 1921.

Strange Deaths in the BIBLE

-by Craig & Jane o'END TIMES

The Bible is a misunderstood book. First of all there are the inevitable half-informed types who know all they know about Christianity from the Jimmy Swaggart show that they and their tough-minded realist friends get together and ridicule. This type of self-important straw-man puncher is beyond our help in this forum. A second misunderstanding comes from some types who wish to assert the present "canonical" text as the literal (as in God-to-Moses-his-stenographer) Word of the Lord. These people are subject to the embarrassment that the Bible does not consist merely of the beatitudes and the 23rd Psalm, nor is it a tightly constructed logical exposition of the faith, not entirely anyway. The Bible was largely constructed from oral tradition, and that doesn't usually make things neat. But it can make things lively.

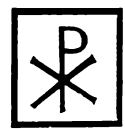
Some of the stories of strange deaths in the Bible may well be apocryphal, but the memorable legends were absorbed into the tradition before any written version was ever created and are thus indistinguishable, at least on logical historical terms, from the true canonical history of redemption. A good candidate for this kind of apocryphal account is found in II Kings 2:23-25. Seems Elisha the prophet was on his way to Bethel, after miraculously purifying the water at Jericho, where they had been suffering an unusually high miscarriage rate, kind of a Canaanite Love Canal. Anyway, as he was on his way to Bethel, he ran into some unruly kids who laughed at his skinhead hairstyle: "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" Which was apparently an insult of some magnitude, because Elisha whipped around and cursed them in the name of the Lord, whereupon two she-bears came out of the woods and chewed up 42 smart-ass kids. Teaches them to laugh at skinheads. Kind of like the "Christian Young People" stories popular amongst the tamer members of the flock decades ago, where Johnny would go out to play even though Mommy told him not to, and would inevitably come home to find Mom dead in the kitchen. And the egg-shell of his young life is crushed, just for playing in the sandbox too long. Sometimes one has to wonder if Palestinian parents thousands of years ago had a hand in putting some of these heavy messages in the scriptures to keep little Levi in line.

Speaking of adolescent rebellion, there is the famous story of Absalom, the son of King David. He had rebelled against his father and had been so successful as to chase David out of the country and get himself anointed king. But David came back with his armies to take the kingdom back. But with the inexplicable illogic only a parent can understand, David ordered his men "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And so it happened that Absalom met up with the servants of David. (II Sam 18) Absalom was riding away from a disastrous bloodbath at the hands of David's forces, fleeing like the wind on his trusty steed, a mule, when he forgot to look where he was going, the hoodlum, and got his head stuck in the branches of an oak tree while his mule sped out from underneath him. The people who were chasing him remembered David's orders and left the poor sap swinging with his noggin wedged amongst the oak limbs and ran to tell their general, Joab. Joab would have none of this mercy nonsense. He told the soldier to stop wasting his time and took himself and his armor-bearers to where Abbie was dangling. He took "three stout sticks (NEB)" and stuck them into Absalom's chest as he hung there, still alive. THEN his armor-bearers beat the poor slob to death and buried him in the forest under a big pile of rocks. So much for David's chain of command. David was heart-broken, and little Abbie was the first recorded in a long line of tragedies involving teenagers and their carelessness on the roadways.

But war was in general a pretty gruesome affair in those times. Ancient Palestine was a pretty barbaric place, all told, with lots of rapes and stonings and body mutilation. A good example is the story of a Levite traveller in Judges 19. He had taken a concubine from Judah, a woman with whom he had had some trouble. She up and left him in a huff and went back to Father in Bethlehem. But her master wouldn't stand for it, and he went to Bethlehem to get her. Anyway on the way back, concubine in tow, he found a place to stay with an old man, a hill-country fellow who happened to work and live among Benjaminites (another tribe of Israel, and thus OK people to spend time with.) But things got really ugly then, as the worst scum of the town beseiged the old man's house, demanding that he send out the visitor so that they could rape him. After the old man tried without success to appease the mob with his virgin daughter and his own concubine, the Levite took matters into his own hands and threw his little Miss Trouble from Bethlehem out to the gang. They raped and beat her all night and she collapsed at the door of the house. Next day the Levite was on his way and, getting no answer from the bloodied girl on the doorstep, slung her over his mule and went home. When he got there he "took hold of his concubine and cut her up limb by limb into twelve pieces; and he sent them through the length and breadth of Israel." His horrible story, coupled with the shock of getting rotting concubine parts in the mail, ended up convincing the rest of Israel to go to war against Benjamin, kind of like the *Maine* or the *Lusitania*. But if she'd only kept meals on the table. . . .

Enemy kings and generals fared quite badly in the various God-ordained Israelite campaigns across the Holy Land, because there were a lot of interesting and treacherous ways to die in those times. Note King Eglon of Moab (Judges 3). Israel had done evil in the eyes of the Lord, something the chosen people somehow managed to do about every couple of chapters in the Old Testament, and the Lord had strengthened Eglon and Moab so that they could conquer the Israelites. Anyway, the Lord's favor on the heathen is not so long-lived, and after eighteen years a left-handed Benjaminite assassin named Ehud rid the nation of Fat King Eglon. Eglon was a very fat man. Ehud made a sword that he could hide under his pants and he brought the tribute of the Israelites to his Royal Obesity. After giving the king the loot, Ehud claimed to have a secret message for the king; when he got him alone, he stabbed Fatso in the belly. Interesting thing is, Eglon was so fat that his lardy flesh closed right around the hilt of the blade. And, as the KJV says, "the dirt came out," i.e. Eglon shit his dying shit -- the Hebrew word translated "dirt" is connected with the meaning "crotch" or "anus." A lot of newer translations skip the dirt and just talk about the sword coming out his back, but you all know what really happened. Anyway our man Ehud got away because the kings attendants thought Eglon was merely relieving himself in the closet. They speak wiser than they are 'ware. . .

There's a sampler of some intriguing stories of deaths in the Bible. Naturally most of the gory ones are from the barbaric Israelite days, though there are a few in the civilized Roman times, like Ananias and Sapphira being struck down for lying about their profits to the Lord (something the IRS would love to emulate) and King Herod being eaten (presumably alive) by worms because of his blasphemy (Acts 12:18). Now you all can have fun and find your own tales. The historical books of the Old Testament (Joshua through Esther) are better than Homer, and it's one book your mom's not likely to take away from you.



& by the way, if you got a spoon of brains left, send C & J a buck for a copy of END TIMES itself - 1085 14th St., # 1234/ Boulder, CO 80302. An intelligent look at PR & other related (?) subjects.

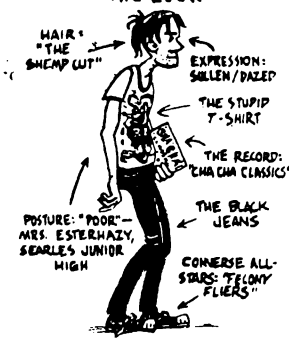
EDITED BY MARY PEACOCK

THE LOWLIFE SCUM

WRITTEN & DRAWN BY Jim Ryan

THEY'RE... GUYS IN THEIR 20S, URBAN & SINGLE.. TRASH CULTURE MUTANTS!

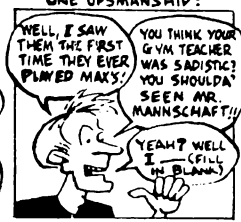
THE LOOK:


HAIR: "THE SHEMP CUT"
EXPRESSION: SULLEN/DAZED
THE STUPID T-SHIRT
THE RECORD: "CHA CHA CLASSICS"
THE BLACK JEANS
CONVERSE ALL-STARS: "FELONY FLIERS"
POSTURE: "POOR"— MRS. ESTERHAZY, SEARLES JUNIOR HIGH

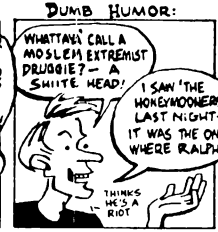
THE ATTITUDE:

FACILE CYNICISM:

ONE UPSMANSHIP:


WELL, I SAW THEM THE FIRST TIME THEY EVER PLAYED MAX'S!
YOU THINK YOUR GYM TEACHER WAS SADISTIC? YOU SHOULDA' SEEN MR. MANNSCHAFT!!
YEAH? WELL I — (FILL IN BLANK)

DUMB HUMOR:


WHATTAYA CALL A MOSLEM EXTREMIST DRUGGIE? — A SHIITE HEAD!
I SAW 'THE HONEYMOONERS' LAST NIGHT— IT WAS THE ONE WHERE RALPH...
THINKS HE'S A RIOT

MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC:

A FASCINATION WITH ALL THINGS BIZARRE, SLEAZY, AND MACABRE.

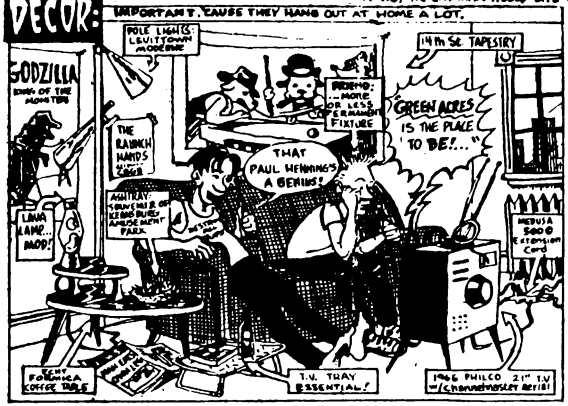
Q&A:

Q: LOWLIFE SCUM HANG OUT WITH MALE FRIENDS A LOT, ARE THEY GAY?
A: NO, NO GAY MAN WOULD LIVE IN SUCH AN APARTMENT.

Q: ARE LOWLIFE SCUM FROM UNDERPRIVILEGED BACKGROUNDS?
A: NO, THEY'RE MOSTLY WHITE, MIDDLE CLASS, EX-SUBURBAN KIDS WITH ONLY THEMSELVES TO BLAME.

DECOR:

IMPORTANT, 'CAUSE THEY HANG OUT AT HOME A LOT.


POLE LIGHTS: LEVITTOWN MODERNE
14TH ST. TAPESTRY
GODZILLA
KING OF THE MONSTERS
FRIEND: MORE OR LESS PERMANENT FIXTURE
GREEN ACRES IS THE PLACE TO BE!..."
THE RAINBOW HANDS OF LOVE
THAT PAUL HENNINGS'S A GENIUS!
ASHTRAY OVERFLOWS WITH CIGARETTE BUTTS AND AMUSEMENT PARK TICKETS
LAMP... MOP?
MEDUSA 5000 Extension Cord
SEXY FORMICA COFFEE TABLE
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- GREEN ACRES
- THREE STOOGES— Especially with Shemp!
- THE BOWERY BOYS Hunter Hall & Leo Gorcey are L.L.S. role models

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YAN YAN

THE QUART OF WONTON SOUP

(MSG CONSOMMÉ)

BEERS*

*WORD EXISTS ONLY IN PLURAL FORM, AS THE CONCEPT OF A SINGLE BEER IS UNKNOWN.

BEERS GLOSSARY:

BEERS: LIGHT CONSUMPTION; A WADING POOL OR LESS.

SOME BEERS: NORMAL CONSUMPTION; THE ANNUAL OUTPUT OF LUXEMBOURG

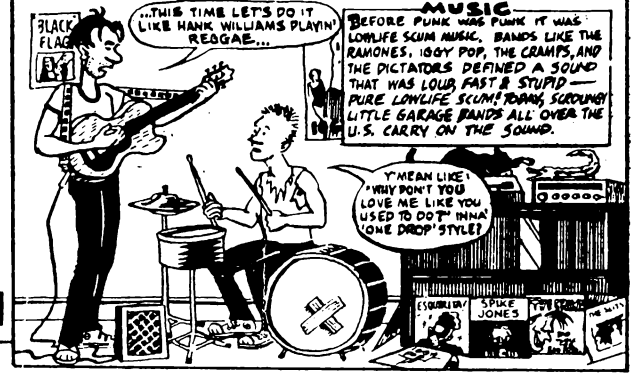
A BUNCH OF BEERS: HEAVY CONSUMPTION; THE U.S.S. NIMITZ SWAMPED BY A CREST OF LAGER.

CVLTVRE

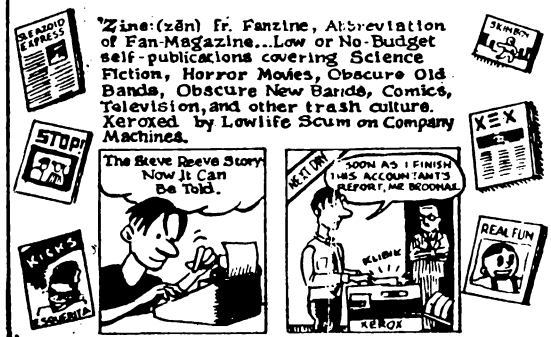
NOT THE CONTRADICTION IN TERMS YOU'D THINK!

MUSIC

BEFORE PUNK WAS PUNK IT WAS LOWLIFE SCUM MUSIC. BANDS LIKE THE RAMONES, IGGY POP, THE CRAMPS, AND THE DICTATORS DEFINED A SOUND THAT WAS LOUD, FAST & STUPID — PURE LOWLIFE SCUM! TODAY, SCROUNGY LITTLE GARAGE BANDS ALL OVER THE U.S. CARRY ON THE SOUND.


BLACK FLAG
...THIS TIME LET'S DO IT LIKE HANK WILLIAMS PLAYIN' REGGAE...
Y'MEAN LIKE "WHY DON'T YOU LOVE ME LIKE YOU USED TO DO?" INNA 'ONE DROP' STYLE?
ESQUERITA
SPIKE JONES
THE SEX

THE 'ZINE SCENE


SEXOID EXPRESS
STOP!
KICKS
'Zine: (zān) fr. Fanzine, Abbreviation of Fan-Magazine... Low or No-Budget self-publications covering Science Fiction, Horror Movies, Obscure Old Bands, Obscure New Bands, Comics, Television, and other trash culture. Xeroxed by Lowlife Scum on Company Machines.
SKINROT
XEX
The Steve Reeve Story Now It Can Be Told.
SOON AS I FINISH THIS ACCOUNTANTS REPORT, ME BRODNAX
KLUNK!!!
XEROX
REAL FUN

ART GANGS

... GROUPS OF ARTISTICALLY INCLINED LOWLIFE SCUM GUYS & FEMALE COUNTERPARTS WHO STAGE EXHIBITS & EVENTS, PUBLISH 'ZINES, AND THROW PARTIES.

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Lion Books
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HER PROPOSITION WAS SIMPLE:
BE A CON WITH A NUMBER—
OR A CORPSE WITH A NAME
RECOIL
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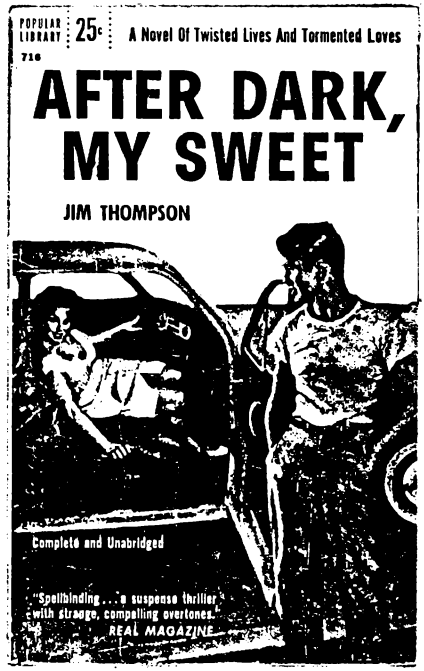
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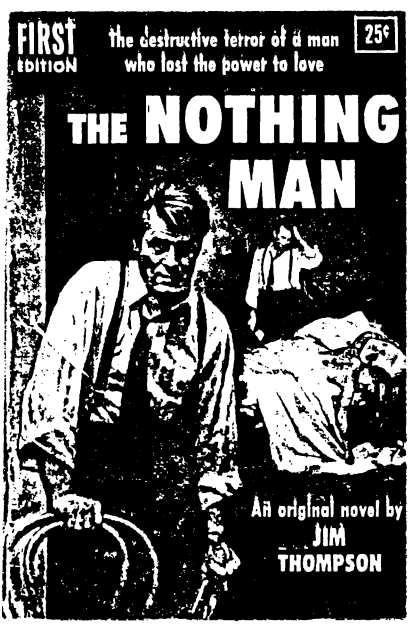
A Novel Of Twisted Lives And Tormented Loves
716
AFTER DARK, MY SWEET
JIM THOMPSON
Complete and Unabridged
"Spellbinding . . . a suspense thriller with strange, compelling overtones."
REAL MAGAZINE


FIRST EDITION
the destructive terror of a man who lost the power to love
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THE NOTHING MAN
An original novel by
JIM THOMPSON

A LION ORIGINAL
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A SAVAGE NOVEL OF
CRIME AND LUST IN A BIG CITY HOTEL
a SWELL-LOOKING BABE
Jim Thompson
212

JIM THOMPSON

I swear, you people are so fucking lucky. You can just bop on down to the nearest bookstore, plop down 3 or 4 bucks, and walk out with a great book by Jim Thompson - say, THE KILLER INSIDE ME or SAVAGE NIGHT. Christ, what I had to go through to get those books...

I got hooked back in '76, on an old copy of THE KILL-OFF that I picked up at a flea market. Ever since, I've been on the search; begging, borrowing, trading and spending more $$ than I can afford, just to get a few more of the 29 amazing books that he cranked out. It wasn't easy. Virtually all of Thompson's books were paperback originals ("Never published before anywhere") for obscure, extinct paperback houses of the '50s like Lion, Regency, and Popular Library. In days when Spillane & the MacDonalds went through dozens of printings, Thompson would be lucky to get two. I've managed to bag 20, but now that the originals go for up to $60 a shot...

The hell of it is, they're worth it. Think "hardboiled". Immediatly, Hammett & Chandler spring to mind, then Cain and maybe McCoy, as the Masters. Now add Thompson. No kidding, he really is that good.

Thompson's world was tough, brutal, and corrupt, peopled with tough, brutal and corrupt characters. Before the anti-hero, he wrote novels with no heroes. His protagonists/narrators would be quite dandy villians for a lesser author, and the rest of the cast usually isn't much better. A favorite narrator is the cold, remorseless psychopathic killer, frequently a cop - and no one painted these characters as well as Thompson.

Most of his novels are crime, rather than detective or mystery. There are no white knight detectives in shiny armor, and preciously few (probably added at publisher's request) happy endings. The crimes are definitely street-level: simple con games, low-level graft, and the inevitable crime of passion. The plots snowball into a series of murders to cover up the original crime. The violence is sadistic, but never grautuitous - and not always physical. These are not ordinary cops-cut-crime-capers. They didn't call Thompson "the dimestore Dostoyevsky"for nothing.

Oddly enough, his personal life doesn't seem to reflect that of his fiction at all. Born 1906, died 1977, his family remembers him as a gentle family man who loved people & animals & was a good provider. He did work a wide variety of jobs to support his family, including steeplejack, gambler, and hotel doorman. He also scripted two Kubrick films (THE KILLING and PATHS OF GLORY) and acted in the '75 remake of FAREWELL MY LOVELY. A friend of the family once commented how strange it was that such a nice man could write such nasty books.

However, there are a few juicy rumours around, hotly denied by the family which suggest otherwise. One tells of Jim spending time in an alcoholic sanatorioum. Another claims that his father committed suicide by ripping up his mattress & stuffing the excelsior down his throat when Jim was a day

late trying to spring him from an asylum. For the truth on these & others, we'll have to wait for the ant-like labors of grad students.

But back to his books. His best known is probably THE KILLER INSIDE ME, which Stanley Kubrick referred to as "probably the most chilling & believable first person story of a criminally warped mind I have ever encountered". And that's no lie. For a taste of the mind of a paranoid schizophrenic, look no further.

On the outside, Lou Ford's just another slow-witted good ol' boy from Central City, Texas. He's the genial, easy-going deputy sherriff that everyone likes. But on the inside, it's another story. He's a totally brilliant schizo fighting to keep up his front that protects him from "the sickness".

But the demons take over. First, it's a little double murder to avenge his brother's murder. Then, a little murder to cover-up. Then another one to cover-up the cover-up. And of course, no one suspects good old Lou, who's quite capable of fucking a woman, putting his shorts back on, and beating her to death without flickering an eyelash. He just goes on, calmly and almost lovingly, eliminating any possible threat to himself until...

Probably the next best known is THE GETAWAY, which was filmed in the '70s by Pekinpah. The basic rational is similar to KILLER INSIDE ME, with murder begatting murder, but the overtones are literally hellish.

Doc McCoy's a master bankrobber who's seemingly pulled off the perfect job. But little things go wrong, and their well-planned escape quickly degenerates to a desperate shooting sprees and groveling attempts to avoid the law. And their end destination: Hell. I kid you not.

Often overlooked, but one of my personal faves, is THE CRIMINAL. A 14-year old girl is raped & murdered. Her 15-year old neighbor is suspected. There really isn't evidence to justify holding him, but the yellow press gets on it, & next thing you know, they've beaten the confession out of him. Told in a series of narratives from each of the principal characters (the boy, his parrents, the editor, the reporter, the bailiffs, etc.), the impression is that the boy is the only one who doesn't deserve to fry. Powerful.

Yeah, this is just a sampling of the great stuff waiting for you in Thompson's books. Totally existential violence, or, psychokilling for intellectuals. "Why'd they all have to come to me to get killed?" laments Lou Ford in KILLER INSIDE ME. And even though I've coughed up $10 or $20 for ratty editions of books that you can now pick up new for $4, I have no regrets. Only thing that pisses me off is how much everyone (blind??) ignored Thompson when he was alive. Just think, if people had ejaculated one quarter over him as much as they did JD MacDonald, there might have been, maybe 10 or 20 more Thompson books....

NOW & ON EARTH
HEED THE THUNDER
NOTHING MORE THAN MURDER
CROPPER'S CABIN
THE KILLER INSIDE ME
THE ALCOHOLICS
BAD BOY
THE CRIMINAL
RECOIL
SAVAGE NIGHT
THE GOLDEN GIZMO
A HELL OF A WOMAN
THE NOTHING MAN
ROUGHNECK
A SWELL-LOOKING BABE
AFTER DARK, MY SWEET
THE KILL OFF
WILD TOWN
THE GETAWAY
THE TRANSGRESSORS
THE GRIFTERS
POP 1280
TEXAS BY THE TAIL
IRONSIDE
SOUTH OF HEAVNE
THE UNDEFEATED
NOTHING BUT A MAN
CHILD OF RAGE
KING BLOOD

Jaded Eyes On [redacted]

True Detective

[redacted] Magazines

I've just finished reading every true detective magazine I could find - all 15, everything from BEST DETECTIVE CASES to TRUE POLICE CASES. According to popular belief, this should make me a raving maniac, a fiend just waiting to brutally sodomise the girl at the corner store or to rape, kill, & eat the neighbor's 5-year old son.

But I'm not, and it hasn't. If anything, these mags make you want to go out & campaign for the death penalty & vote to recall the local soft-on-crime/bleeding-heart-liberal judges. That is, if you can work up the nerve to go out your triple-locked door onto streets choked with muggers, rapists, and sodomisers. If it wasn't for the efforts of those brave, brilliant, and hopelessly undermanned, homicide detectives, you'd never leave your house.

Those are the kind of people these rags are aimed at - cop freaks. Calling 'em "true detective" instead of "true crime" rags isn't an euphemism - it's the truth. When I read about a crime, I want to know about the criminal. Who is he? What did he do? Why did he do it? When you read one of these mags, you'll get every gory detail & clue at the scene of the crime, and the complete step-by-step story of how the cops catch some poor faceless, seemingly motiveless, slob. After 15, I feel like I can figure out a homicide scene as well as any 10-year veteran. Yippie. . .

Because of this overwhelming cop/detective fetish, most of these rags are pretty slo going. Even the most interesting crimes drag when the story's all detective chitchat about hunches, and lotsa the crimes covered aren't even interesting. I mean, knocking people off for insurance/inheritance is positively generic, & the rapekill boys aren't much better.

But, hidden among the dreck, there are a few gems. Sometimes, the crimes are so strange, or the investigation so wierd that you wonder why they even bother with the other crap. For variety, a profile of a famous murderer or an article on the current crime menace (crack, terrorists, serial killers) gets thrown in, and are almost always masterpieces of paranoia & gore. Most mags also use little crime tidbits as fillers that are also better than the stories themselves. These rags are not without their rewards.

Whoever said "You can't judge a book by its cover" must have been thinking of detective rags. Let the buyer beware. The most lurid cover & sensational blurbs may mask the dullest cops&killers stories. The photos on the covers are generally unrelated to the contents. The clever names of the killers are dreamed up by the authors, and of course they never live up to 'em. Ditto for the titles. "The Mystery of the Headless Corpse" was just that the animals made off with

the head. "They Pumped Iron Between Rape-Kills" just means that the culprits belonged to a health club. The only way to pick out the truly worthwhile titles is by skimming the more promising stories - & of course, using this guide.

For this guide, I tracked down 15 titles from three publishers (& if anyone has any that I don't have, I'd love to trade...). As far as quality goes, RGH publications lead the field: FRONT PAGE DETECTIVE, INSIDE DETECT., MASTER DETECT., OFFICIAL DETECT, & TRUE DETECT.. They're the thickest, best written, and most widely available. Globe Publications are the most prolific. They're responsible for BEST DETECTIVE CASES, DETECT. CASES., DETECT. DRAGNET, DETEC. FILES, HEADQUARTERS DETECT., STARTLING DETECT., & TRUE POLICE CASES. And then there's the weirdos at The Type Shack, who publish REAL DETECT. ANNUAL. How weird? It's a quarterly.

Now, an attempt to sort 'em all out. It ain't easy, since many of the rags, especially Globe's, are almost interchangable. Unless otherwise noted, issue cited is the Feb. '87 number, or, for annuals, the 1987 edition.

BEST DETECTIVE CASES (Globe, Annual)- Culled from the previous year, I hope these aren't their best. Pick: "Fernando's House of Sex Slaves".

DETECTIVE CASES (Globe bi-monthly) - Absolutely indistinguishable from the annual, but includes a great oldie: "Clue of the Green Thumbprint".

DETECTIVE DRAGNET (Globe, bimonthly) - Definite improvement, here, with much sleazier crimes. More sex. Best: story about babysitter suffocating charges to shut 'em up.

DETECTIVE FILES (Globe, bi) - Stories tending to be a little more complicated. Couple of Child molesters/killers & a great article on sleepwalker murderers.

FRONT PAGE DETECTIVE (RGH, month.) - The crimes aren't so much sleazy as quirky, with odd little out-of-the-ordinary details. Strange article on car-related killings, and a great letter columns. The readers want blood!

HEADQUARTERS DETECTIVE (Globe, bi) - A typical Globe rag. Nothing of note.

INSIDE DETECTIVE (RGH, mon.) - This seems to be where RGH sticks the sex crimes. Lighter on procedure, heavy in homosexuals & drugs. Solid.

MASTER DETECTIVE (RGH, monthly) - The procedure is here, but thank god, they don't go into detail. Lotsa variety, here, with a homo priest, cop-of-the-month, and an oldie.

OFFICIAL DETECTIVE (RGH, monthly) - Pick of RGH's line, going more into crime reconstruction than detection. Interesting article on New York City serial rapists & a woman killing her daught & trying to pin it on hubby.

REAL DETECTIVE ANNUAL (Type Shack, quarterly). - The best. A magazine that, comparatively, could be god. Weird. Everything in here looks like reprints, and nothing is post '70. We get: an article warning women about the hazards of the night, one slagging vice squads, a teen ('55) killing his girlfriend's family & trying to blow up their house, Dutch Schulz, Albert Fish, and even a crime does not pay confession. Plus moremoremore. I wonder what institution the editors escaped from.

STARTLING DETECTIVE (Globe, monthly) - A typical Globe rag, but at least this one has a letters column. Hey, let's castrate 'em all!!

STARTLING DETECTIVE YEARBOOK.(Globe, Annual) - They actually picked some good, above average stuff for this annual reprint collection, including a great Sylvia Likens (MCBF #2) article. Almost all sex-crimes. Globe's best by far.

TRUE DETECTIVE (RGH, monthly) * The oldest, but not the best. Somewhat "experimental" writing & stories, but nothing overly exciting. Nice crack article.

TRUE POLICE (Globe, bimonthly) - Standard Globe, with a punk-rock related murder that's not as good as it sounds & a bad article on serial killers.

TRUE POLICE YEARBOOK (Globe, annual)- Cover claims "All The sex shockers of the year in one big issue!!!". Remember what I said about detective rags & their covers? Right. You'll find more sex-shockers in DETECTIVE DRAGNET & DETECTIVE FILES.

A few other things worth noting. RGH may have the better stories, but Globe has the cheesier ads & a greatpenpal ad section if you're into kinky things like marriage. They also have fillers that are better than the usual articles, and will usually have at least one "oldie" crime per issue. RGH would be well-advised to imitate them.

Final verdict: REAL DETECTIVE ANNUAL by a mile. Serious buffs should try OFFICIAL, MASTER, or STARTLING DETECTIVE ANNUAL. Fans of sex, slease, & crimes against children may want to get OFFICIAL DETECTIVE, DETECTIVE DRAGNET, or DETECTIVE CASES. The rest, well, how much did you want to be a cop when youwere a little kid?

back issues

The following back issues are still available, get 'em while you still can. All 50¢ each (cheap), cash or stamps only. And don't forget the bonus subscription offer, next two MCBF delivered to you doorstep for only $1. Don't be stupid.

#1 Suburban Cheerleader Murder, Silicon Valley Lynching, Teenage Guilt Novels, weird books, strange movies.

#2 Sylvia Likens Torture-Murder, Devil's Dictionary, Morbid tourists in San Francisco, Tenn Anorexia Novels, more nut books, & a few odd movies. out of print

#3 Andy Warhol Assassination Attempt, the Sleazy books of VC Andrews, Double Jeopardy Contest, bonus book section.

#4 Tacoma Bridge Collapse, Little Suck-A-Thumb, A Ted Bundy Bibliography, Confession Magazines, & still more books...

READ HARD OR DIE

INCREDIBLE COLLECTORS, WEIRD ANTIQUES, & ODD HOBBIES by Bill Carnichael (Warner, 1973)

Yer typical Sunday supplement would probably bitch & moan about "lack of cohesiveness" or some other such nonsense, but at least it's all interesting. The human being as a magpie, collecting everything from barbed wire to glass eyes. Sometimes, Carmichael concentrates on the collector, and sometimes just uses that as an excuse to get at the collectable, as in circus freaks or Hitler watercolors, but you can't argue with his taste.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A ROCK&ROLL STAR by Sharon Lawrence (Dell, 1976)

I move to make this required reading for all those "bring back the '70s" cretins. Gosh, the recording industry is just filled with nice, honest, & artistic people who all love each other. All you have to do to become a superstar is to work hard, be nice guys, & brown-nose all those nice people. You can end up just like your heroes. ELTON JOHN. LYNRD SKYNRD. Or ATLANTA RYTHM SECTION. Retch!

DB COOPER: WHAT REALL HAPPENED by Max Gunther (1985)

Let's say "What probably happened". Author got the story from an anonymous "Mrs. Cooper" who didn't ask for a cut, but didn't give any hard evidence, either. The story sounds authentic enough. After landing, Cooper charmed his way into the home (& pants) of a local girl, & later married her. Laundered the money a few years later in Las Vegas. A story that lives up to the legend.

FIRESTARTER by Steven King

Behind the hype, beyond the mobs of semi-literate fans, drooling over every word of The Master... there's a decent writer. Here, we have a nice, logically developed story of a pyrokinetic girl. (Translation: she doesn't need a match to start a forest fire). Kinda rough on the parents, toilet traing a kid who can burn 'em to a crisp. Of course, the big bad, military-industrial-CIA types get wind of her, & the chase is on. Good fun until the absolutely unforgivable ending. Fucker.

FREAKS by Leslie Fiedler (Touchstone, 1978)

Not your typical "gee, they look weird" freak book. Fiedler is a Distinguished Literary Critic who writes Serious Stuff. Like this. Subtitled "Myths & Images of the Secret Self", he looks at the history of the image of the freak, in art, literature, & (you guessed it!) real life, tying it in with myths, archetypes, & the collective unconcious. Not for light reading, but no grad school pre-requisites. Lotsa pretty pictures.

KIDNAPPED AT CHOWCHILLA by Miller & Tompkins (Logos, 1977).

Real freaky, here - a born again Christian crime book. Written before the kidnappers were caught, the book cuts between the stories of the snatched kids in the bus, & their moms & dads climbing the walls over it. Of course, the parents are all praying to the Lord to deliver their children, & eventually God gets around to giving the kids the strength to break out of their underground prison. How nice! Left unsaid is why he let this happen in the first place.

THE KILLING OF THE UNICORN by Peter Bogdanovich (Bantam, 1985)

Dorothy Stratten, Playboy Playmate, rising young actress, was brutally raped & killed by her ex-husband/manager (who promptly suicided). See the movie STAR '80. Here, Peter Bogdanovich, her last director & fuckmate, tells his version. He equates her death as a tragedy on par with Bhopal or the Ethiopian famine. She was so talented, such a gift to humanity, that Ghandi wasn't fit to lick her feet. Absolute insanity. This book actually manages to be sleazier than the crime!

NATIONAL ENQUIRER: FAMOUS DISASTERS (Pocket, 1985)

No comment needed. You've read the ENQUIRER, you love it, so buy this book, ok?

"I AM JOE'S BODY" - Reader's Digest (Berkeley, 1980)

"I am a 3-pound mushroom of gray & white tissue of gelatinuous consistency. No computer exists that can duplicate all my myriad functions. And all this fitted into the crown of a size-7 hat! I am Joe's brain".
A gold star to those good folks at the Reader's Digestfor giving our internal organs a platform to speak their minds! Everyman his own stand-up comedy club!

THE BLACK DEATH by Gwyneth Cravens & John Marr (Ballantine, 1977)
No relation, I assure you, but I would be honored. Bubonic plague hits Manhattan, and the shit hits the fan. Riots, anarchy, death, doom & destruction. Just another ordinary day in the big city? Then why are those helicopters spraying shit...

SCARFACE by Paul Monette (Berkley, 1983)

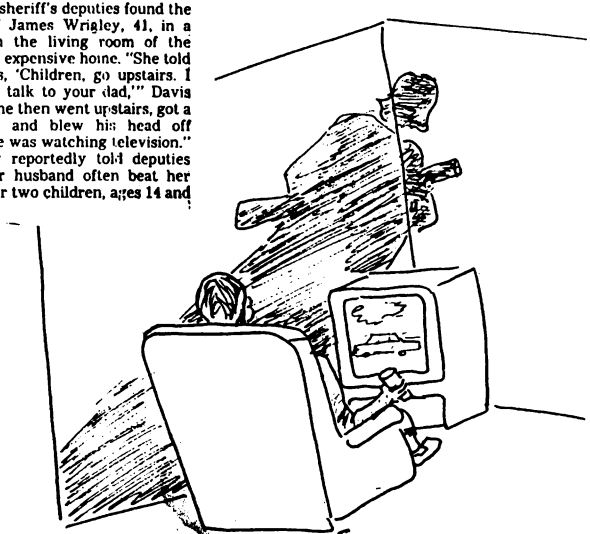
First movie tie-in/novelization in many a moon which has kept me awake. The American Dream is not dead! A poor Cuban refugee can still make a few million in just a matter of months, selling coke & killing a few people! He can also get his head blown off for his trouble, too, but that's the breaks, no?

THE CHOKING DOBERMAN by Jan Brunvand (Norton, 1984)

You've heard it. Family comes home, finds Bowser choking on human fingers. Or the kid getting castrated in the store bathroom. & so on. Unfortunately, not true. They're all urban legends, as Brunvand explains, & traces them back to all sorts of folk tales. & in the process, he tells lotsa incredibly sick stories. There's a message in here, someplace...

JOHNNY MARR
P. O. BOX 640111
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109

A Los Altos woman was charged with murdering her husband with a shotgun while he watched television in their living room. Katherine Wrigley, 35, was arrested after she called the police emergency line and said, "I just shot my husband," Lt. Tom Davis said. Santa Clara County sheriff's deputies found the body of James Wrigley, 41, in a chair in the living room of the couple's expensive home. "She told the kids, 'Children, go upstairs. I want to talk to your dad,'" Davis said. "She then went upstairs, got a shotgun and blew his head off while he was watching television." Wrigley reportedly told deputies that her husband often beat her and their two children, ages 14 and 10.



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